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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MINISTRY AT LARGE,

IN THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE,

PRESENTED AND READ AT

A PUBLIC MEETING

HELD IN THE

WESTMINSTER CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,

Sunday Evening, January 23, 1870.

By EDWIN M. STONE.

With his respects.

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MINISTRY AT LARGE.

TO-NIGHT, the MINISTRY AT LARGE commemorates its twenty-eighth anniversary. In relating the story of another year, all the brevity consistent with an intelligent presentation of its work and results will be observed.

The year now closed has been marked by a varied experience. The routine of duties which attach to this form of the Christian ministry has been comprised in the regular Sunday ministrations of the pulpit, the superintendence of the Sunday School, conducting social religious meetings, making parochial visits, distributing religious tracts and papers and relieving the wants of the destitute. In the discharge of these duties I have been made acquainted with much that awakened painful emotions, and that showed how large still is the class needing a confidential counsellor and friend. Sorrows have found utterance in words of anguish, wrongs have been revealed that stagger one's faith in the rectitude of human nature, and deprivations have been discovered that prove how much and how long self-respect will endure before yielding to the stern necessity of making known individual and family privations.

The cash receipts and expenditures for the relief of destitution, reported monthly to the Board, amount to $688.31. This sum has been expended for fuel, food, cloth, shoes, rents,

Thanksgiving, sickness and funeral expenses. Besides this, I have distributed nearly 500 articles of wearing apparel, supplied by the Ladies' Sewing Circles of the First Congregational and the Westminster Congregational Societies, the Benevolent Committee for Christian Work, and by several thoughtful friends. To the visitors of the Children's Mission I have been indebted, as in previous years, for the ready relief of cases referred to their care.

Of the numerous applications for assistance, 230 were new cases. These were carefully investigated and decided upon according to their respective merits. In each instance where aid was bestowed, it was to meet a temporary need or to encourage self-endeavor. In addition to all this, a considerable amount of time has been devoted to seeking employment for those who asked no other assistance. In the work of the year its burdens have been greatly lightened by the cordial cooperation of the faithful and interested helpers associated with me. To the several Dispensary Physicians I would express grateful acknowledgments for their prompt and kind attention to the sick in whose behalf I have solicited their professional services. To the Managers of the Fuel Society I would also return thanks in the name of many worthy families assisted by my request. I desire likewise to make a similar expression of appreciation to the ladies and gentlemen who kindly yielded to a request to give an amateur entertainment at Harrington's Opera House in aid of this Ministry.* With the income of the Mauran fund, together with the contributions of several thoughtful friends, I was enabled to make fifty families happy on Thanksgiving Day. No occasional duty assigned me is fraught with more pleasant circumstances than this.

It would be impossible, in the time allotted to this report, to describe all the good accomplished by this distribution of your bounty. Sunlight has penetrated many dark and cheerless homes, courage has been revived in many drooping

* This entertainment took place on Friday evening, December 17, 1869. The several parts were finely rendered, and the occasion was one of unmingled gratification to the large audience present.

hearts, faith in a better future has been strengthened in many doubting souls, and cheerful endeavor has been made to take the place of a spirit yielding to despair. Few whom fortune has blest with the abundance of material prosperity can realize the anguish felt by one who has known "fullness of bread," but by unavoidable misfortune has been brought low, and can see nothing in prospect but a still lower deep ;—nor can such fully comprehend the reactionary power of hope that an unexpected expression of sympathy, made tangible by material aid, will produce. "I tell you the truth," said not long since a worthy mother who had experienced a clustering of woes,—and she said it in tones of sadness that no words of mine can convey to another's ear,—"I tell you the truth, when I say I know not which way to turn." And when the word of sympathy was endorsed by material relief, had you seen the instantaneous transition from the expression of utter desolation to that of gratitude and returning trust, you would have exclaimed, as I did within myself, "How blessed is the mission of a dollar!" But it is not in solitary instances like this that we witness grateful manifestations. They are numerous as the days of the year. Nor are we to suppose that the heart ordinarily goes out of its normal condition when the helping hand is no longer needed. Gratitude is a deep-seated feeling inseparable from an incorrupt nature, and is kept active by memory long after the occasion for its expression has passed away. To illustrate this statement, permit me to read to you an extract of a letter from one who came from a foreign home to this city a stranger, and in an hour of sorrow and need was met and ministered to as a brother and friend. At the date of his communication he was in a distant State, hoping to make a comfortable home for his family.

"Rev. and Dear Sir :—

"I take the liberty of writing to you, gratefully thanking you for the many kindnesses to my family during my absence from Providence. Believe me, dear sir, it makes tears start from my eyes every time I think (which is very often) of the kind treatment we have received since we arrived in this country; and I assure you I thank God for

giving you the kindness of heart that makes you feel for the poor and needy. This, dear sir, is no light thing for me to say; I, who for seven long years of apprenticeship, was brought up and taught all the infamous doctrines of socialism, chartism, and the new-fangled name for infidelity, *free thought;* but what man with any brains could live, much more die, with such detestable doctrines, though I must confess, to my shame, that I was two years in manhood before I could throw them off; but by God's help, (and in a common workshop conversation,) all infidelity was thoroughly eradicated from my mind, and I was a free man.

"If, sir, there were the lingering embers of infidelity, the thought of that religion which could prompt and teach you so many of the real precepts of the Great Teacher who respected all alike, without regard to country or color, those embers would be extinguished by your example, and the good advice I received whilst sitting under you in the good city of (the aptly-named) Providence. I sincerely thank you, and the ladies under you, for your kind and substantial care and help during my youngest child's sickness, and I assure you, if I cannot repay you, I can do the next best thing, and that is, to imitate your example and live a godly life, and do for others as far as possible what you and other kind friends have done for us. My wife wishes me to thank you for her, and the children tell me not to forget to tell Mr. Stone that they would rather be in Providence, though it is a nice school they now attend. Accept my thanks once more, and I hope you will live long to make others as happy as yours,

Truly and hopefully,

_____."

And such, my friends, is the character of the work done by your contributions the past year. The bread of blessing you have cast upon the waters through your chosen agency has returned not after many days, but early, to give you gladness in the consciousness of having lifted a heavy burden from many over-taxed natures, and sending them on the great highway of life, beneath the bright heaven of self-reliance. The open winter upon which we have entered has been favorable to the poor in the matter of fuel, though an offset is found in the diminished demand for labor. The high cost of the prime articles of food, as well as of rents, bears hard upon the laboring classes. But the sorest trial, perhaps, comes upon

persons of culture and capacity, against whom the tide of misfortune has long set, who shrink from a revelation of their situation, and who, with a loan of $100 for six months or a year, could establish themselves in an honorable employment, educate their children and become contributors to the material wealth of our city,—but who, for the want of such temporary aid, are doomed to struggle for a bare subsistence, with the grim reality of disappointment ever dancing before them. In all the years of my ministry here I have never known more frequent opportunities to do good in this manner or felt more deeply the need of money with which to accomplish it.

Our Sabbath worship presents no feature that essentially distinguishes it from previous years. The stated ordinances have been observed with spiritual profit. The seed of the word, it is believed, has found lodgment in some hearts. The church has had an addition to its numbers, and Baptism has been administered to one adult and nine infants and children. Upwards of 150 children have been influenced to attend public worship with a good degree of regularity, forming a habit (in the midst of an increasing Sunday desecration in this city) to which it is hoped they will adhere as life advances.

As in previous years, I have continued my correspondence with individuals and families who were formerly members of our congregation and church, and to whom I have sent tracts and papers for their own reading and for distribution. Both letters and papers have been acknowledged with expressions of pleasure, and afford evidence of unabated attachment to their old religious home. One, in the far west, writes thanks for papers received, adverts to the "many happy hours" spent in the Sunday worship in the Chapel, and hopes we shall soon have the so much needed new church and separate Sunday School room. Another writes: "I don't forget you nor any of the Chapel people. Things come to memory that happened long ago, and then I am brought back to my girlhood days. When, in imagination, I again sit in my class with old familiar faces and my teacher by my side, I can hardly realize I am not still with you. Oh, that I had listened

to the lessons more attentively. Had I done so, how much better would my thought now serve me as I read the holy book in which I find my present comfort." Still another writes: "I received a copy of the Monthly Journal for October last week. We are grateful to you for it, and also for other journals and papers we have received. It makes us glad to think we are still remembered by our old friends. I think often of you and of friends at the Chapel, and I sometimes feel sad that I am so far away from where I have had so many happy associations." Many pages could be filled with extracts similar to these, showing the strength of the ties here formed, as well as illustrating the missionary labors carried on in distant fields by those who go out from the home-fold of this Ministry.

With our Sunday and Sewing Schools the year has been one of unqualified prosperity. The whole number of pupils registered is upwards of 300, and the average attendance is larger than at any former period in its history. Thirty-eight teachers are engaged in the responsible work of moral and religious instruction with a devotion never excelled, and that beautifully illustrates the Christian doctrine of self-abnegation. The infant class, registering eighty pupils, is an interesting and important feature of the school, while from the teachers of advanced classes pupils are receiving blessed influences whose effects are to endure forever. If, with all the disadvantages of insufficient room, uncomfortable seats and poor ventilation, the spirit and success of our school has been augmented, we feel sure that when the contemplated new accommodations are furnished, a new and increased prosperity will also be realized.

By the courteous invitation of the Sunday School of the First Congregational Society, our school enjoyed a summer day excursion to Rocky Point. It was a season of unmingled pleasure, and is treasured among the delightful memories of the year. By the generous contributions of the First Congregational and Westminster Congregational Societies, the teach-

ers of the Sunday and Sewing Schools were enabled to prepare an attractive Christmas festival for about 400 pupils. The Christmas tree, tastefully decorated with presents, was of course a chief object of interest, both to the children and to the crowd of spectators who witnessed the scene. All the arrangements were judiciously made. The devotional exercises, and a brief Christmas poem recited by a pupil, were appropriate to the occasion, and at a seasonable hour the joyous throng were dismissed to their homes, there to renew the pleasures of the evening by an examination of gifts expressive of personal regard, and symbolizing the richer gift to the world of God's well beloved Son.

The Sewing School has closed another year of usefulness, with highly encouraging prospects for the future. The record of this department of philanthropy is one that earnest and faithful teachers may look upon with satisfaction. The importance of their work as a formative element in feminine life, cannot be over-estimated.

The Library still continues to be one of the more valuable features of our work. The eagerness with which its privileges are sought is well illustrated by the fact that upwards of 10,000 volumes have been issued during the year. The Parish Library has also been more resorted to than ever before, and it has been gratifying to notice that the books most in quest in both libraries, are those adapted to minds of advanced intelligence. Few libraries, it may be safe to affirm, are more thoroughly read than these, and an addition of the best class of works of recent date would greatly enhance their usefulness. The librarian, Mr. Leonard Draper, has discharged his duties with great faithfulness, and kept the books in excellent order. Besides this use of the libraries, two hundred copies of the Sunday School Gazette have been distributed semi-monthly among the pupils,—making an aggregate for the year of 4,800 copies. These papers have been read with much interest, and have proved a valuable auxiliary to Sunday instruction.

The question is sometimes asked, why, after so many years of active labor on the part of charitable institutions, poverty and destitution still prevail undiminished among us? The answer is a simple and obvious one. Were human needs to comprise a specific number of objects at a given time, and no additions were afterwards to occur, the efforts of philanthropic individuals and of organized charities would in a few years carry the entire list of needy ones through the trials of deprivation, and place them in the desirable condition of self-support—thus closing up the work of humanity for want of subjects on which to expend substantial sympathy. But the truth is, and it should not be overlooked, that while hundreds in our city every year pass over the bridge that leads them from dependence to independence of necessary relief, hundreds of others coming from abroad, or separated from the prosperous masses of our native population by misfortune or other causes, take their places. So that each year comes freighted with a burden of want and woe that distinguished its predecessor. This state of things is inseparable from our local condition. A city so essentially manufacturing as this, will necessarily attract to it large numbers in search of employment, and of those who obtain it a considerable per centage will be persons who have exhausted their means in getting here, and whose wages at first are inadequate to supply the wants of their families. Then, there are widows left in destitution, with the charge of children for whom they can but partially provide. Then, again, there are single persons of both sexes, of unexceptionable character, incapacitated for long continued labor by the debilitating effects of incipient consumption. For all these, as also for other classes no less worthy of sympathy, something must be done, in the quiet and fraternal manner pursued by this ministry, to lighten the burden of one, to relieve the overtaxed energies of another, to renew the waning courage of a third, to cheer the sick chamber of a fourth, or to smooth the descent of a fifth to the grave. Until Christianity has effected its perfect work, there will be a condition of society calling for the constant exercise

of a judicious philanthrophy. The intimate relation that uncared for destitution holds to vice and pauperism, renders it imperative to the social purity, industry and material prosperity of a community, that all tendencies to degradation and moral corruption be neutralized, or what is better, destroyed, by the prompt and persistent outflow of humanity. That will be a prosperous city in the noblest form of the expression, and the grandest illustration of the great Christian idea of brotherhood, in which wealth and poverty are brought into conditions of mutual sympathy.

My observation during the past year sadly confirms the tales of previous years, that intemperance is a chief cause of extreme poverty and of pauperism among us. Were the drinking habits of society within the line of abstinence, there would be little cause for mourning the presence of what has become a gigantic evil. Of all wives and mothers who come to me to make known their destitution, a large per centage trace it to inebriate husbands. That excess in the use of intoxicating liquors is increasing is obvious to even a superficial observer. Never before have so many persons been seen in our streets bearing the marks of free indulgence, or in a state of intoxication. No more painful story can be told of the tempted and fallen than is to be found in the records of the Police daily spread before our citizens. But for the woe of which I speak, the Dexter Asylum would have few inmates, and the State Farm few occupants. How long this evil shall be suffered to do its work of ruin is for the good people of this city to decide. What existing laws will do to remove it remains to be seen. But in the meantime the course of personal duty is plain. No one who comprehends the actual condition of society should set a social example that the weakest and most easily enticed may not follow with perfect safety. No organized body of men on festive occasions should encourage a habit that has been so terrible a destroyer. It is not what one or another with strong nerves and iron will can do, or *think* they can do, with impunity, that should constitute the rule of conduct in this particular, but what others, of

highly sensitive organization, free social nature and feeble self-control, *cannot*, with safety, do. Every man is, in some sense, his brother's keeper, and no one is justified in putting a "stumbling block or an occasion to fall," in his way. Now, more than ever, does humanity appeal to all that is noble in man to apply the Pauline principle of self-denial for the sake of others.*

There are other evils, common to all cities, prevalent here, to which attention has been called in past years, and which I am sorry to say do not appear to have been diminished. Of these, gambling is a prominent one. Its victims are not solely a class that have come to make it a profession, but comprise many of youthful age and of mature years, who have yielded (thoughtlessly perhaps) to its seductive charms. What shall be done to remove this evil is a question demanding profound consideration. And the same may be said of another vice that I cannot here discuss.

Vagrancy among boys and girls of suitable age to attend school is on the increase, and the street instruction they daily receive is preparing them for the discipline of the Reform School or for jail birds in adult years. It is a misfortune to this dangerous class that we have no practicable law to inter-

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* The Report of the Chief of Police for the past year presents some very suggestive statistics. The whole number of arrests was 5,944. Of these, 871 were females. The causes of arrest were as follows:—

Drunkenness,	2896
Reveling, occasioned mostly by excessive drinking,	520
Common drunkards,	36
Rum nuisances,	42
Selling intoxicating liquors without license,	102
Keeping intoxicating liquors for sale,	156
Assault and Battery, mostly stimulated by intoxicating liquors,	311
Larceny,	343
Stubborn children,	62
Vagrancy,	324

Other causes are divided among disorderly houses, gambling houses and gamblers, violation of Sunday law, prize fighting, disturbing public schools, robbery, picking pockets, etc. 1933 disturbances, occasioned mainly by excess in drinking, have been suppressed. There are 246 places where intoxicating liquors are sold, the use of which, the Chief reports "is indisputably the greatest evil which afflicts our city."

cept them before they reach the point of positive crime. All the reasons assigned in former reports in favor of an Industrial or Farm School remain in full force.

We have special cause to be anxious about the character of our population, for the reason that immigration is bringing annually to our shores, large accessions from the overstocked portions of the Old World. Of these, a large class "are unfit, mentally and bodily, for good settlers or good citizens." They bring with them habits that soon injuriously affect our native born. With these are mingled many paupers and criminals, who in some instances have their passage paid by the public authorities of their own countries, as the cheapest method of getting rid of them. To have the almshouses and prisons of Europe emptied upon our shores, is doubtless an agreeable relief to the eleemosynary and penal institutions of trans-atlantic countries. But to us it is a sore evil, as is but too manifest on all public occasions that attract large numbers of people to our city. I suppose the State at present can do but little to prevent this wrong, and towns and cities can only pass on, from place to place, those who are likely to become a public charge, while detectives can feel no certainty that burglars and pick-pockets may not by superior skill escape them. How far the Federal Government can interpose to arrest this flagrant violation of national comity, I am not advised; but with the fact staring us in the face, that between 200,000 and 300,000 immigrants annually seek homes in the United States, the subject assumes an importance far greater than appears hitherto to have been attached to it.

Good homes are essential to the good morals of a community. A family occupying by necessity for a length of time, a miserable tenement, with low and repulsive surroundings, will gradually sink down, in social and moral tone to the level of the character of their habitation. It is practically impossible to train up children in the virtues of a true life, or to inspire parents with a becoming self-respect, whose eyes rest upon nothing within or without that appeals to their ambition to rise. The half underground habitation, damp, dark, and

filled with offensive odors, or the dwelling above-ground, destitue of paint, paper, or any culinary conveniences, with windows broken, doors dilapidated, and cracks and crevices in floors and walls, admitting in winter currents of cold air that defy the neutralizing power of caloric, are not merely generators of disease, but stultifiers of social elevation. As I have made my daily rounds in certain sections of the city, and breathed the impure atmosphere of these forbidding dwellings, I have ceased to wonder that vice and immorality prevail. Indeed, it is a moral puzzle to know how the tenants of such tenements *can* be virtuous, or maintain even the outward decencies of life.

A great need of our city at the present time is comfortable and convenient tenements, at rents such as laboring men and persons of small means can afford to pay. This class of dwellings falls so short of the demand, that families are often forced into neighborhoods of moral corruption, where children soon become familiar with forms of sin they should never know, at least until strong enough in principle to resist its temptations. A Rhode Island Peabody could render no better service to the industrial interests and the social life of Providence than by erecting a block or blocks of tenements such as here referred to; and while the manners and morals of the community would thereby be improved, and the ends of philanthropy secured, the investment under suitable regulations could be made to yield satisfactory returns. This subject is engaging attention in many of the principal cities of our country; both from a material and moral stand-point. It is every year assuming a more commanding importance, and appeals with corresponding force to the practical judgment and wise sympathy of all who see an inseparable connexion between a high-toned community and the safety of property.*

It has been correctly said, that "the mere relief of suffering and poverty, without reference to the effect upon the individ-

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*I have been for some time engaged in making investigations on this subject, and when completed propose to lay the results before the public.

ual, is now regarded as unwise and useless. The exercise of the feelings of humanity or the promptings of duty,—though these are the foundation of all systems of charity,—are seen to be injurious, unless controlled by an enlightened judgment, in accordance with a wide experience. There is, therefore, a science of charity, which must embrace education and practical training among its objects, as well as a judicious relief of existing poverty and suffering. * * * * The great aim of both public and private charity should be the elevation of its objects, and making them self-dependent. To this end we need employment, education, and training to some industrial pursuit, as well as the enforcement of the principles of temperance, honesty and industry." It is upon this sound principle that the Ministry at Large has been, for the whole period of its existence, conducted. It has recognized the trite fact, that prevention is better and cheaper than cure, and that help should come in as a temporary necessity and an encouragement to individual exertion. In attempting to meet the varied conditions of society, it has also recognized the vital relations of the physical, intellectual and moral or spiritual in man—and that for the attainment of a perfected society, these are to be developed in harmonious proportions. In a word, that mankind are to be made useful and capable of getting their own living, as well as intelligent and moral. Hence, this Ministry supplemented the ordinary ministries with its Sabbath worship, its social religious meetings, and its Sunday school. Hence it opened its Sewing School, which has lived to see similar organizations springing up and doing a successful work, under the auspices of different denominations of Christians, and to witness the introduction of needle-work into the public schools as a part of female education. Hence, its evening school, continued until an impulse had been given to public sentiment, that ultimated in establishing six of this class of educational agencies as a permanent feature of the public school system of our city—a class of schools now springing up, under the action of the R. I. Educational Union, all over the State, and that are destined to produce an intel-

lectual revolution among the hitherto unreached masses.* Hence, too, the efforts of the minister in his daily walks and visits, to influence children tending to vagrancy, to attend school; and still again, the devoting a portion of his time, to procuring work for the unemployed, and to nameless other services designed to elevate the lowly to a higher social plane.

The need of an institution that does not exist among us is coming every year to be more sensibly felt. I refer to a Home for Aged Men, to be established essentially upon the principles of that excellent charity—the Home for Aged Women. Attention has for several years been turned to the establishment of a Free Public Library. Such an institution is called for by the growth of our city and the spirit of the age. It is to be hoped that in the midst of increasing material activity and prosperity, a measure so calculated to advance the intelligence and refinement of the community, will not for a moment be lost sight of, and that at no distant day it may be consummated on a scale honorable to the wealth and public spirit of our city.

Since the last annual meeting, John D. Jones, Esq., a member of the Board of Managers of this Ministry, has deceased. He was from the beginning a steadfast and earnest friend of our mission. He sympathized warmly in every measure calculated to promote its prosperity, and gave freely of his time and substance to secure it. As a personal friend of the Minister, his memory will ever be tenderly cherished, while his genial spirit, his business integrity, and his faithful and conscientious discharge of public duties as a member of the municipal government, will perpetuate in this community a universal respect. Within a few days a shadow has again fallen upon our hearts, as it also rests upon the hearts of many others here and elsewhere. One identified with the founding

*As a director in the Board of the Rhode Island Educational Union, the Minister at Large has been made familiar with its operations, and takes pleasure in here bearing testimony to the valuable labors of its agent, Mr. Samuel Austin. Twenty-five Evening Schools are in successful operation this winter in various parts of the State, affording the means of education to large numbers precluded attending day schools.

of our Sunday School, and who for the six years following, consecrated an energetic nature to building up and giving a broad scope to this Ministry, has been translated to a higher sphere. Among the first to welcome the Minister to his new and untried duties, and to act as a guide in his explorations of an important field, he remembers with the freshness of yesterday the scenes of squalid poverty and of domestic sorrow to which he was introduced, found alike in basement and attic homes. He remembers, too, the cheery voice and the words of encouragement that infused new life into many faltering spirits; and when he recalls the varied incidents that checkered the first years of his labors here, as well as the constant and valuable co-operation he received, he would do injustice to his feelings and to the feelings of surviving associates, did he not bear this tribute to the Christian worth of Mrs. Harriet Bowen Cheney. She died at her home in South Manchester, Connecticut, January 12th.

In reviewing our work for the year it gives me pleasure to say, that our prospects for usefulness were never more promising. More than 300 families are directly and indirectly reached by our several methods of action, and we believe a good has been accomplished not to be estimated by any mercantile standard. This good we wish to extend. With an increase of means we can do so indefinitely. For such means we ask,—believing that the favor of the past may be accepted as an earnest of continued friendship and support.

THE PUBLIC MEETING.

The exercises were opened with a select piece by the choir. The 13th chapter of St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians was read and a prayer offered by Rev. Mr. Woodbury. A hymn was then sung, after which the report was read. At the conclusion of the report, His Excellency Governor Padelford, President of the Board of Managers of the Ministry, addressed the meeting. We have been told, he said, this evening, that this is the twenty-eighth anniversary of the Ministry at Large. Those who have been acquainted with this ministry during its existence know what was the character of that section of the city where it was located. We also know the improvements that has taken place since its organization. I attribute it mainly to the influence of this ministry. Its faithful and devoted band of Sunday school teachers, its evening school and sewing school have been the means of doing great good. A large amount of labor has been performed and a large amount of sin has been prevented. There have been times when the mission needed more pecuniary aid and stronger sympathy of the community. It needs it at this moment. The Sunday School wants more room. Its limited accommodations are well known. A large lot has been procured and mostly paid for. I hope that the day is not far distant when a house of worship suited to the wants of the Sunday School and members of the ministry will be erected. I hope that when the mission calls upon you for pecuniary aid from time to time, that it will be cheerfully given. May God bless this mission in the future as it has in the past; its faithful Sunday School teacher and devoted minister; all who give towards it or make any sacrifice that will aid the efforts of the society in its endeavors to do good.

His Honor Mayor Clarke then addressed a few words of encouragement in support of the ministry. I am here, said he, because I cannot help feeling a deep interest in any society or organization whose object is the prevention of vagrancy and crime. You cannot measure by any pecuniary standard the influence for good which an institution

like this has exerted for a quarter of a century. The civilized world has not yet arrived at a full knowledge of the best method of dealing with crime or criminals, or the causes which lead to the commission of evil. Our jails, prisons and houses of correction yield but poor and pitiful results. How few who enter those institutions graduate from them any better than when they entered. The great difficulty seems to be, that when a boy or girl commits a crime and is sent to one of these institutions, it is too late to do much towards his or her reformation. The reforming period has past, and there is small chance for recovery. Society has to mourn the loss in consequence of the want of prevention of these youthful indiscretions which send so many children to our reformatory institutions, who, perhaps, had they been properly taken care of and educated, would make good citizens and be ornaments of society. The deepest philosophy as well as practical Christianity unite in urging us to support the influence exerted by this society—prevention. Thousands of dollars have been spent by society in the punishment of crime, but here is an institution in our midst which has been laboring during the past quarter of a century for the prevention of crime. This mission ought certainly to meet with generous and unstinted support. Look at the expense of crime in this city alone. Our police department is costing at least one hundred and fifty thousand dollars a year, to say nothing of the expenses of the expenses of the courts, trial by jury, and other matters, that must be paid for. From the annual report of the Rhode Island Educational Union, we learn the startling statement that there are upwards of fifteen thousand persons beyond the school age who can neither read nor write. Ten thousand cannot read even. In this city of Providence we have twenty thousand children under fifteen years of age who are not found in the public schools. Undoubtedly, some portion of them go to private schools, but a larger portion are to be found in the streets learning vice, which eventually leads them to the Reform School. The State had better pay the expenses of every young man at the highest college in the land than to have them graduates of the State prison at a great deal less cost. We have thousands around us uneducated, and we cannot help reaping the fruits of such a population.

There could be a great deal said upon this subject. Circumstances have a great deal to do with the commission of crime. Early influences have much to do with it, and it seems to me we should look with compassion upon those who are surrounded by such associations. I can only hope that this and other similar institutions may receive the hearty and generous support which they fully deserve. They must receive it, or we shall have to suffer every woe. I am happy to hear that so much good has been accomplished, and earnestly hope that

sufficient pecuniary means will be given this mission to enable it to continue the good work.

The Rev. Arthur May Knapp, pastor of the First Congregational Church, next addressed the meeting. He called attention to the want of accommodations for the large Sunday School, and entered an earnest plea for a new house of worship, providing the necessary conveniences for the schools and congregation, to be erected at an early day.

The services concluded with the singing of the doxology by the choir, and the benediction by Rev. Mr. Woodbury.

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